1: Burrows--180-181 (1947-48) Woleaians
116, 843, 784 Ifalik

"Childbirth is another event that imposes this condition. A woman is not surrounded by taboos during most of her pregnancy, except that sexual intercourse is prohibited from the time pregnancy is first diagnosed--commonly by the interruption of the menses --until the [181] external signs become apparent. The duration of this taboo is said to be about a month; intercourse during that time, it is said, would kill the baby. Thereafter intercourse is resumed, and indeed, approved, until a late stage in the pregnancy."

2: Damm et al. --168 [4] (1909) 1938 Woleaians
116, 843 Faraulep

Pregnant women are not permitted to have any fish at all, and they have to observe other prohibitions about food. These last for five months after the child is born; if they are disregarded, the natives believe that the guilty woman will be very ill.

2: Damm et al. --189 [10] (1909) 1938 Woleaians
116, 843 Faraulep

A woman knows that she is pregnant when she stops menstruating. Just a little while before her confinement she goes to the menstrual house and stays there for two months. The islanders believe that the child will die if there is any sexual intercourse for five or six months after its birth.

4: Krämer--107 (1909) 1937 Woleaians
116, 843 Lamotrek

The sorcerer... stays on the lot next to the house of the pregnant woman; in his hut he prepares medicines. All people around here may only drink the juice of coconuts and no other liquid. Once a month, for three or four months, the sorcerer makes the tafei i lólomei... as a precaution against loss of blood, for the liquid of the broken stalk of the plant is red like blood. Fasting is prescribed for all as the magic is practiced. The sorcerer, vak, has an ax similar to the one used in the construction of canoes; with it he shapes a djep fish, a Caranx, takes a wooden bowl, lifts it four times and then starts his magic. The fish is tied to a fishing rod, (Fig. 62 [VMM: see source]) and placed on the abdomen of the pregnant woman with the head pointed up. Then the sorcerer takes the ax in his right hand and with it beats the fish three or four times; then he lifts up the fish on the angle rod as a symbolic expression of removal of the illnesses. djep is the term for "to leap" from which the Caranx, as a leaping fish, has derived its name. The action is meant to have the effect of making the child jump out; first comes the water, djal.

4: Krämer--107-111 (1909) 1937 Woleaians
843 Elato

[VMM: For the beliefs and customs regarding pregnancy, see Lamotrek 4: Krämer 104, 111.]

4: Krämer--140 (1909) 1937 Woleaians
116, 843 Lamotrek

Women who are pregnant for the first time, are given a medicine, tafei i lolomai* once a month....

*At that time the medicineman carries the póul i lolomai, the angle, and the devil's eyes.

4: Krämer--267 (1909) 1937 Woleaians
116, 843 Woleai

A pregnant woman (ĕsiál, Kotzebue: sasiel) is subject to few taboos.

28: Spiro--40 [2] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 843, 225, 373 Ifalik

"If turtle eggs are discovered the people of the district in which they are discovered may not take a light from another person for four days. A pregnant woman and her husband may not eat turtle eggs at all during her pregnancy."

28: Spiro--81-82
116, 843, 854

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"Babies are desired both for themselves, and as a form of old age insurance. That is, babies are constantly being handled, kissed, hugged, played with, etc. The people have an inordinate desire to fondle babies, and babies are always the center of attention and of attraction in every home, and in every gathering. Babies are wanted, therefore, because of the pleasure they afford. Caring for the baby is never considered a bother or a chore. I have never seen a mother or any other person express resentment over, or anger towards, a baby because of the care and attention she must give it. It is no exaggeration to say that the adult's care [82] of the infant is a labor of love, and we might even question the very use of the term, 'labor.' I have never heard a mother complain of the restrictions on her behavior caused by the infant. A baby knows only smiling and laughing faces, soft arms and soft words. No baby is ever handled roughly, no baby is scowled at or spoken to with bitterness. To repeat, I have never heard an adult utter one word of complaint about the additional burdens caused by a new infant."

28: Spiro--82
116, 842, 843

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"This great love of infants and the ardent desire to have babies may account for the relative absence of psychosomatic disturbances on the part of the pregnant mother. Neither my informants nor my direct questioning of pregnant women revealed any minor physical inconvenience, nor feelings of nausea."

28: Spiro--82 [3] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 843, 784 Ifalik

"The parents observe few taboos during pregnancy. They may not cut their hair, nor can they eat any food cooked over a fire made of driftwood. The husband may not begin a canoe during his wife's pregnancy. If these taboos are violated the parents would become ill.

Sexual intercourse is taboo for the first three months of pregnancy, after which it is desirable. The reason for this differentiation is that for the first three months the baby is but blood and water, and should the parents have intercourse they would kill the infant. After the third month, the baby begins to be formed, and intercourse can no longer harm the baby, but it can expand the walls of the vagina, and thus expedite the delivery.

The same logic applies to the relative amount of work performed by a pregnant woman. For the first seven months she performs only light labor, because the baby is weak. But in the last two months, she works hard, working even in the taro patches, as it is believed that manual activity will facilitate a rapid delivery."

28: Spiro--82-83 (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians-1-2
116, 843, 774, 602. Ifalik

"It is during the period of gestation that the foetus acquires its soul.(ngas) It is the ngas that differentiates the dead from the living, so that before the entrance of the ngas, the infant is not yet alive, and when it departs the person dies. The ngas, whose size is unknown, resides in the 'stomach', and is conceived of as a vaporous substance. ('all same wind'). But its actual formation and derivation is a matter of speculation. Arogeligar maintained that Aluelap gives the baby its ngas inthe eighth month of pregnancy. Others said that the soul enters the embryo through the umbilical cord. (1) The chiefs, on the other hand, maintained that the soul evolves in the baby in the course of its development, like any other organ, though the nature and time if its growth is unknown.

But the foetus not only receives its ngas during the period of gestation, it also receives its blood. Both blood (tra) and food, which the foetus requires to keep alive, are received by means of the umbilicus. Blood is necessary for life. If a person has much blood, he will be strong; if he has little, he will be weak; and if he has none, he will die.

But though the foetus receives its blood from its mother, all questions concerning

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"1. Thus deriving from the mother, which would explain matrilineal descent."

28: Spiro--82-83
116, 843, 774, 602

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians-2
Ifalik

[83] 'blood relationship' elicited negative replies. All blood is the same, there being no differences between individuals or people, and the concept of relationship through blood is completely foreign to them. (2)"

"2. Again it is possible that matrilineal descent is related to the fact of the infant's receiving of his blood from his mother. But questions of this kind, as well as other similar questions sent my informants into peels of laughter. How should they, or any one else know the answers to these questions, and who but an idiot would bother about them. Auelimar, one of my best informants expressed the concensus of the group when he exclaimed, 'who can savvy that?'"

28: Spiro--83 (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 843 Ifalik

"The natives claim to be able to determine the sex of the embryo. If the mother has a craving for coconut water, and if she feels the embryo moving in the womb, it is a boy. If, on the other hand, she has no craving for coconut water, and if the embryo's movement is slight, it is a girl."

28: Spiro--128 [4] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 843, 827, 833 Ifalik

"This is not true of pregnancy, however, which is not concealed, and which is not a tabooed topic for conversation; nor is it true of the exposure or reference to the female breast. (10)"

"10. Despite the exposure of the breast, it definitely has an erotic value, and is fondled and kissed in sexual foreplay. Furthermore, it is an object of sexual attraction, many men commenting, for example, on the attractive breasts of a woman in the TAT."